

## REMARKS

Reconsideration is respectfully requested concerning the objection to the drawing and the related Claims 2, 3, 9 and 10 which call for the saw tooth inner diameter of the band (80). The band 80 forms a part of the latch assembly 100 (FIG's 13A and 13B), but the saw tooth inner diameter is clearly illustrated in FIG. 10, and is fully described on page 11, lines 7-13 of the specification. It should be appreciated that the "ring" as used in the application is ring 60 illustrated in FIG's 6 and 7, which houses the band 80. FIG. 13A does not show the saw tooth inner diameter because only the outer diameter is visible. The inner diameter is partially shown in FIG. 13B. However, it is respectfully submitted that it is not required by the rules that a feature need be illustrated in each drawing. It is thus not considered necessary to show the saw tooth configuration in FIG. 13B because of its being fully illustrated in FIG. 10. It is therefore respectfully requested that the objection to the drawings and to Claims 2, 3, 9, and 10 be withdrawn.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested for Claim 1-14, said claims having been variously rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 and 103 based upon various combinations of U.S. Patent No. 5,819,805 to Donald E. Mosing, et al.; U.S. Patent No. 4,349,048 to Jim W. Clark; and U.S. Patent No. 4,018,468 to Merlin L. Lundquist. Each of these rejections is respectfully traversed.

Each of these three references is non-analogous art. For example, the '805 Patent to Donald E. Mosing, et al., is for a thread protector, not for use as a load ring. The '805 Patent has a band which does not even come into contact with the pipe itself but rather, with the threads at the end of the pipe. A load lift ring enables a tubular to be picked up or lowered, which may weigh several thousand pounds.

The '048 Patent to Jim Clark is likewise directed to a thread protector, which also attaches onto the threaded end of the pipe, not the cylindrical body itself. This is clearly pointed out in Claim 1 of the '048 Patent, which calls for the ends of the belt to be clamped directly onto the threads. The apparatus of Claims 1-14 is used as a load lift ring to pick up very heavy pipe, which each weighs several thousand pounds.

There is no teaching, disclosure or even a suggestion of using a thread protector shown in the '805 Patent to Donald E. Mosing, et al., and in the '048 Patent to Jim Clark, as a load lift ring for picking up or lowering oil field pipe.

The '468 Patent to Merlin Lundquist is likewise not related, at all, to a lifting ring, generally referred to a load lift ring, which can be mounted on a very heavy oil field tubular which weighs several thousand pounds. The '468 Patent is totally non-analogous art because it requires a groove 4 into which a lifting ring 1 is seated in and then tied together to provide a means for picking up a plastic barrel. Oil field tubulars do not have such a groove. It is one thing to place a lifting ring within a groove and tighten it up to provide a lifting ring for picking up a plastic barrel. It is quite another to use such a ring on the outside of a smooth, steel, heavy tubular which enables one to pickup the tubular.

Claims 1-14 of this application each calls for the load lift ring to grasp the oilfield tubular, which is then used to raise and/or lower the tubular. Claim 1 for example, recites in its preamble, "a load ring for rising and/or lowering a oilfield tubular...", and then in its lines 13-15, calls for the band to grip the exterior surface of the tubular.

Claim 8 has similar language in its preamble, and in its last three lines 1-3 on page 20.

This invention enables an elevator to pick up or lower a joint of oilfield tubulars, such as very heavy casing, without using a nubbin such as is illustrated in FIG. 5. Such tubulars are typically very heavy, and are extremely dangerous if dropped onto rig personnel working on the rig floor. This type of accident causes many deaths every year. This type of activity could not be entrusted to a typical thread protector such as are described in the cited '805 and '048 Patents, or the device described in the '468 Patent used with a fork-lift to pick up a plastic drum.

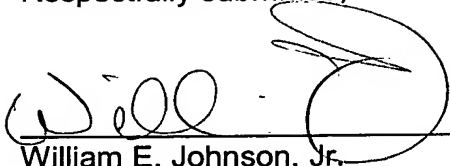
In short, the '468 Patent, the '048 Patent and the '805 Patent cannot be combined as references to show the present invention, because not only do they fail to show the individual specifics of the claimed invention, they are all directed to different arts than those associated with the present invention. It would not be reasonable to consider that those skilled in the art would take a thread protector patent and combine it with a patent for lifting a grooved, plastic barrel to result in the claimed invention of a load lift ring for picking up oil field tubulars having a smooth exterior surface.

It is therefore respectfully requested that the rejection of Claims 1-14 be withdrawn and that this application be advanced to issue.

The undersigned attorney for the Applicant would welcome a telephone call, (713) 355-4200, from the Examiner, if it is believed that this would advance the prosecution of this application.

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Date

Respectfully submitted,

  
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